

## Conservatism vs Extremism

This is a rebuttal to the rebuttal written by Matthew Cerra in the December 24, 2012 AJ News. I do not feel that Francis Gonzalez needs to be defended. Based on his letter he is an educated individual and articulate.

The people, who lived in the soon to be named United States of America, fought for their independence from 1775 – 1783. They dealt with the hardships and death during those years because they believed that it was worth whatever happened to be free to determine their own lives and existence. They did not necessarily want to break away from Great Britain. But because they were not given the ability to represent their individual and community needs and desires before the king and parliament, they had no other choice. The infamous shot heard around the world happened in Concord April 19, 1775. The last battle of the revolution took place at Arkansas Post in April 1783.

On March 1, 1781 the Articles of Confederation were adopted by the 13 states of the “United States of America.” The delegates were afraid of a federal government that would be a “big brother” and so they gave the states immense power with limited oversight by the federal government. And what oversight the federal government had it did not have enough authority to keep the states from fighting between themselves. This led to different currency, tariffs and an unsteady military. Needless to say, by May 25, 1787 the people had decided that the Articles needed to be amended. The states chose delegates and sent them to Philadelphia to make some changes. The delegates completed their work September 17, 1787. Instead of amending the Articles they wrote the current United States Constitution. Virginia was the 10<sup>th</sup> state to ratify the constitution on June 25, 1788. Rhode Island was the last of the 13 original states to ratify the Constitution on May 29, 1790. President Washington was sworn into office in April 1789.

The **framers** understood that the federal government did need powers to oversee relations between the states. So they outlined the federal government rights and wrote the preamble. “**We**, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America” They then wrote the seven articles that delineated how the federal government would function. After much debate they added the Bill of Rights. Ending with the 10<sup>th</sup> amendment, “The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.” Over the next 222 years the Constitution was amended 17 times to cover issues that the people of the United States deemed necessary to address on a national level.

The Constitution is like the Bible and is interpreted in many ways. These interpretations are determined by the individual’s relationships and experiences. This is what makes

America great. We can debate our interpretations with out the fear of being beaten or imprisoned. A young person just getting his political legs can have a discussion with an old codger. And they can both learn from the other. I ask that each person that is reading this go out and buy a copy of the original Constitution or go on the internet and read it. Familiarize yourself with what it actually says. Then read the federalist papers and the writing of the **framers** of the Constitution to help understand what they were thinking and where they developed their ideas.

The conservatives view is that the government is not put in place to provide the opportunity and resources to succeed. Rather it is in place to not take away the opportunity and resources to succeed. As stated in the Declaration of Independence the citizens are ... "endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." We pay taxes to, "establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity." Does that sound familiar?

A man is not free if he relies on another man or government to provide food, unearned income (tax credits or subsidies), health care or the ability to travel to see the sights and beauty of America. The next great devise or gizmo will be invented by a free person. One who has taken the education, however good or not so good, developed his own drive and determination and then makes no excuses to obtain his own dream or vision. This dream or vision can only be stifled by him. Others can hamper the development or try and take away the opportunity and resources. But in the end a true free person will overcome those obstacles to achieve his ultimate dream or vision.

To paraphrase Matthew, while I appreciate the sentiment of progressives in thinking that you are protecting the individual's rights and liberties, I have always found that it lacks the detail necessary to recognize the intricacies of reality.

Jeff Struble, Apache Junction